



Attendance Policy

Mrs N Aveyard – Senior Attendance Champion
Mrs K Leaper – Attendance Lead

naveyard@thewellsacademy.org
kleaper@thewellsacademy.org

Core Statement

At The Wells Academy we believe attendance is everyone's business and we strive for all our students to be in school every day that the school is open. Our unwavering commitment to attendance centres around child-centric actions, evidence-informed practices, and a shared understanding of everyone's roles and collective responsibilities to promote exceptional attendance.

We expect all students to be in school for at least 184/190 (97%) days and strive to achieve the maximum number of days of 190. (100%)

School attendance is not merely a requirement but a fundamental pillar of education. It plays a pivotal role in shaping academic success, personal growth, and future prospects, making it an indispensable aspect of any educational system. Regular attendance to school can have a significant impact on:

- **Academic Achievement:** Regular attendance directly correlates with academic success. Children who attend school consistently are more likely to keep up with the curriculum, perform better in exams, and improve their life outcomes.
- **Knowledge Acquisition:** School is where children acquire knowledge and skills that are crucial for their personal and professional growth. Missing days means missing out on valuable learning opportunities.
- **Social Development:** School provides a vital social environment for children to interact with peers, develop friendships, and learn essential social skills. Consistent attendance ensures children remain connected to their peer group.
- **Building Routine:** School attendance establishes a structured routine in children's lives, teaching them time management and responsibility, which are valuable life skills.
- **Teacher Interaction:** Regular attendance allows for meaningful teacher-child interactions. Teachers can provide personalised support, address questions, and assess individual progress more effectively when children attend regularly.
- **Preventing Knowledge Gaps:** Frequent absences can lead to significant knowledge gaps, making it challenging for children to catch up with missed lessons, potentially resulting in long-term academic struggles.
- **School Engagement:** Children who attend school regularly are more likely to engage in extra-curricular activities, and other enriching experiences that contribute to their overall development.
- **Legal and Parental Responsibility:** Families are legally responsible for ensuring their child's regular school attendance. Failing to do so can lead to legal consequences.
- **Community Wellbeing:** High levels of school attendance contribute to the overall well-being of communities.

We will work with the student and their family to reduce barriers to attendance and seek to offer support to ensure the student is successful at school, working as a partnership, school, student and the family. We know that the foundation to excellent attendance is a high quality education, delivered in a calm, safe and supportive environment in which all students want to attend and can learn and thrive.

Aims

Ensuring all students have a high level of attendance is a key priority of the academy. Students are entitled to a full-time education and we know that students with high attendance do better at school than those with high absence rates. We also know that absence can be a sign of other things happening in a young person's life and want to ensure we have the correct supportive measures in place.



The aim of this policy is to set out how we create and maintain a positive culture that supports and values exceptional attendance. It includes how we:

- Promote exceptional attendance and punctuality
- Follow up absences
- Communicate and work with families to reduce absence
- Monitor absences and analyse patterns of absence
- Work with local partners to support exceptional attendance and reduce absences

Punctuality

All students are expected to attend the academy when it is open. Students are expected to be on site by 8.20am and to be in their line ups at 8.30am prompt.

Students arriving late will be given a late mark. Prior to 9am, students will be issued a 10 minute break detention, students arriving after 9am will be issued a 30 minute same day detention.

The academy operates a 'late gate' system daily to improve punctuality. The academy reserves the right to apply additional appropriate sanctions such as monitoring report and referrals, but each case is judged upon its circumstances. In any case, families will be informed.

Students are expected to stay on the academy site all day, including lunchtime and only leave at the end of the academy day. Failure to comply with this will lead to families being notified that the student has left the premises without authorisation, as well as notifying the Police and a sanction may be issued.

The Process

The academy entrance will have members of the Senior Leadership Team on duty every day meeting and greeting students with a warm welcome into the academy. This is also an opportunity to ensure all students are wearing Perfect Uniform. All students arriving into school later than 8.30am need to sign in at reception.

Morning (AM) registers close at 9.30 am and afternoon (PM) registers close at 1.30pm. Students arriving after these times will be coded U (Late, after registers close) on that register. This is a non-attendance and will impact a student's overall attendance figure. Students who do not receive a morning mark will be coded as O as they have missed all morning lessons and it will be note as an unauthorised absence.

Punctuality does not just apply to arriving to the academy on time but the expectation is that students are in the Right Place, at the Right Time, doing the Right Thing. Students who are late to lessons and still in corridors 5 minutes into the lesson starting will automatically be taken to the reflection room for the remainder of that lesson. Students deliberately truanting will be taken to the Consequence Room for the remainder of the day.

Recording Attendance

We will keep an electronic attendance register and place all students onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of each lesson of each school day including tutor time.

It will mark whether every student is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will use the DfE codes to detail the attendance and absences, please see appendix 3.

Please see appendices 2 and 3 for the absence processes for students who are absent with no reason and for those students who are absent for 19 days or more.

Reasons for absence



Unplanned Absence

The student's family must notify the academy of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 08:30am or as soon as practically possible by calling 0115 748 3390 option 1 or by emailing attendance@thewellsacademy.org.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the academy has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness, or the student is under attendance monitoring.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the academy may ask the student's family to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the academy is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and families will be notified of this in advance.

The Principal will not authorise for any of the following reasons:

- Term-time holidays (including visiting family abroad)
- Study leave
- Trivial illnesses
- Looking after the house or waiting for workmen/deliveries etc
- Looking after siblings, including dropping them off at school or nursery
- Helping with housework or a family business
- Being unhappy or not getting on with other students in school
- Being up late the night before

Planned Absence

We encourage families to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary. Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the student's family notifies the academy in advance of the appointment and supplies evidence to support.

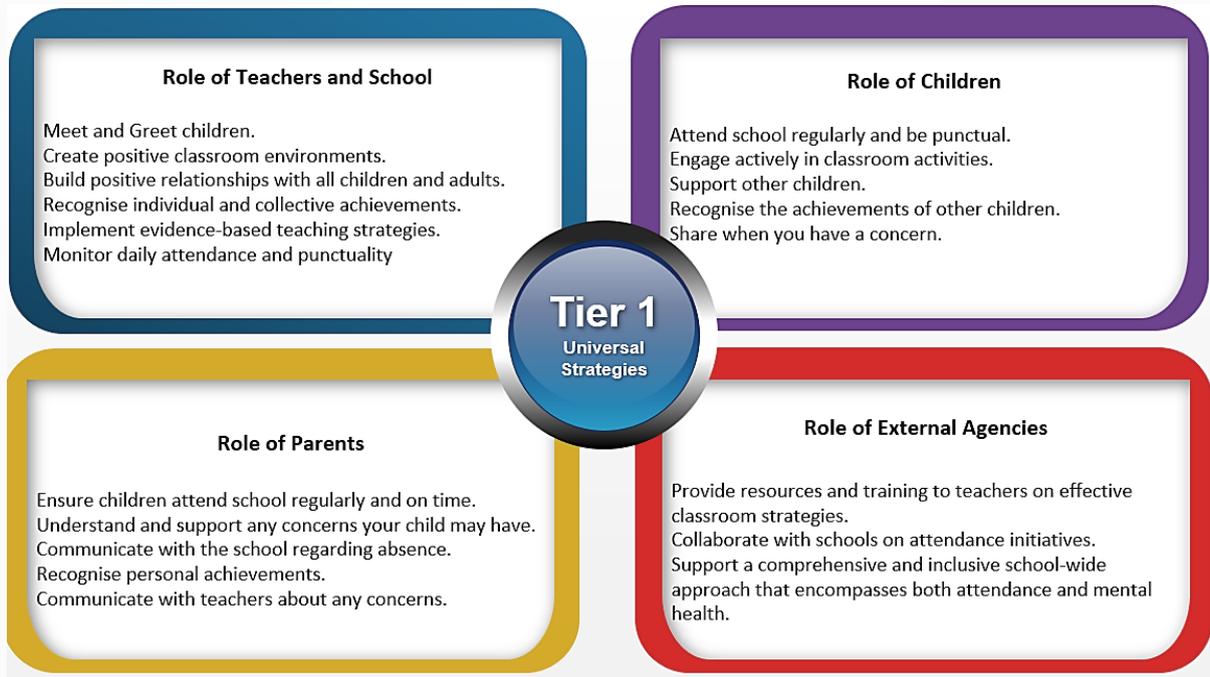
Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments.
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's family belong. If necessary, the academy will seek advice from the family's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- Traveller students travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, barges (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the academy, but it is not known whether the student is attending educational provision.

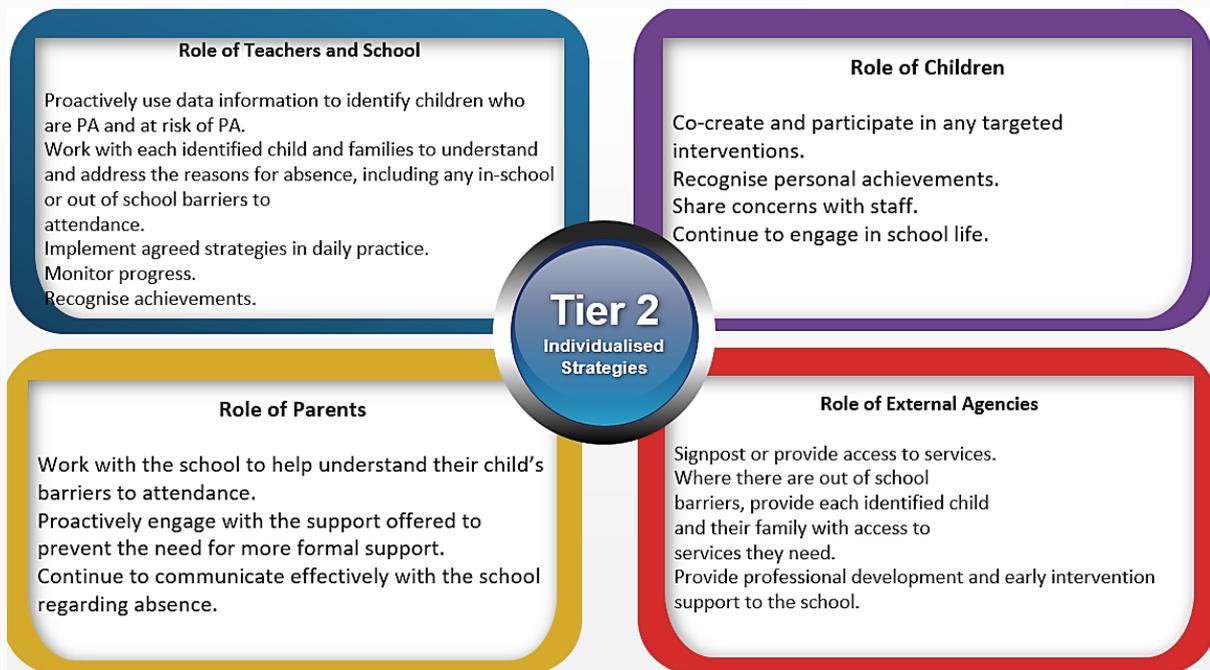
A Multi-Tiered System of Support

To guarantee a comprehensive approach to attendance, we implement a Multi-Tiered System of Support. A Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) for school attendance involves three tiers of intervention, with roles for teachers, the school, children, families, and external agencies – including the Local Authority. Data-driven decision-making and training requirements are pivotal to the implementation of this system. The system aligns with the Department for Education's (DfE) 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance' statutory paper 2024.

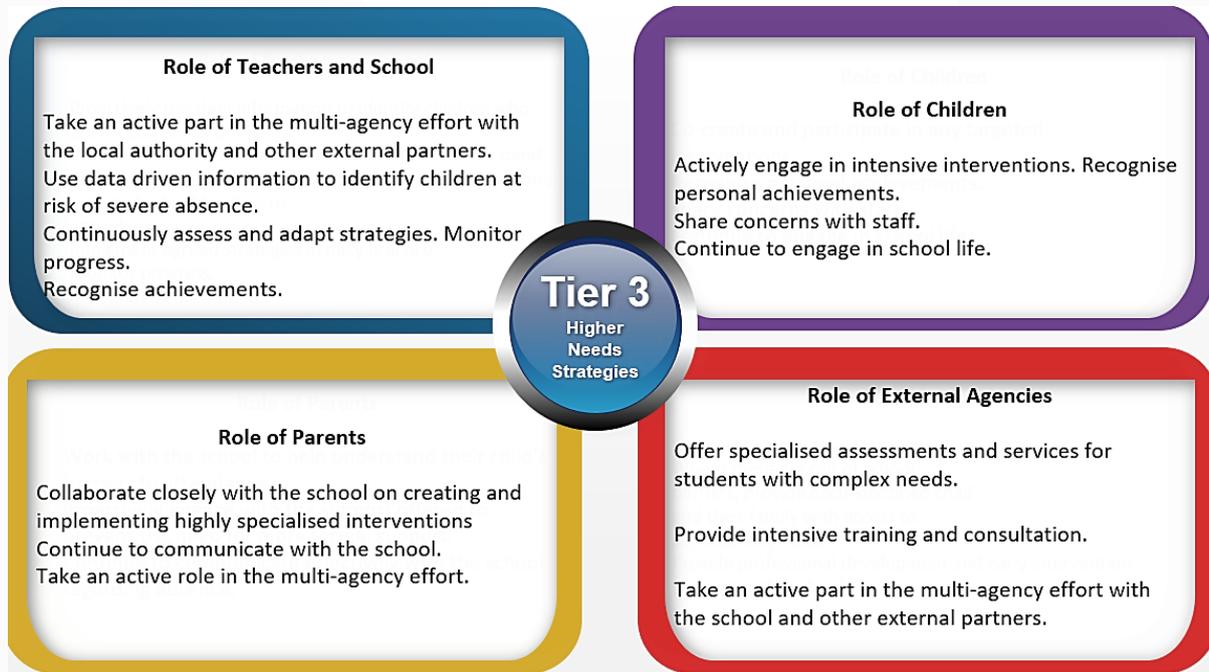
Tier 1: Universal Approach: Establishing a baseline universal attendance approach that benefits all children.



Tier 2: Internal individualised Strategies and Early Help Support: Tailoring strategies to individual needs and providing early help support for persistent attendance challenges.



Tier 3: Higher Needs Strategies Support: Furnishing specialised support for children, young people, and families with complex attendance requirements, including access to external agency support when necessary.



Home Visits

Staff at the academy will complete home visits. These visits are to strengthen relationships and offer support in reducing barriers to absence as well as listening to both students and family voice. Working together enables us to ensure we are signposting families to the most appropriate external agency that can offer support. Home visits are also completed as part of our safe and welfare checks and should be seen as a supportive measure.

Holidays in Term Time

Holidays in term time will not be authorised by the academy. The law says that families do not have an automatic right to take their child out of school for holidays during term time. All requests must be submitted in writing to the attendance team prior to the requested absence. The academy will not authorise term time holidays unless in exceptional circumstances authorised only by the Principal.

Leave of absence

A leave of absence is granted at the Principal's discretion, including the length of time the student is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as but not limited to:

- Death or serious illness of a parent or sibling.
- Return of a parent from active service (forces).
- Approved public performances.
- If your request for a term time holiday or other absence is refused and your child is still taken out of school, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and a penalty notice will be actioned.

The academy considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least two weeks before the absence. Evidence may be required to support any request for leave of absence.

Missing Children

If no notification has been received from families regarding their child's absence after 10 school days, the academy will report the child as 'missing from education' to the Local Authority for them to immediately investigate.

After 5 days of absence and continued non-response, the academy will issue a potential holiday letter.

Monitoring Attendance

Analysing attendance

The Wells Academy will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify students or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these students and their families.
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns.

Using Data to improve attendance

The Wells Academy will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to key stakeholders, to facilitate discussions with students and families.
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies.

Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a student misses 19 or more days of school (10%), and severe absence is where a student misses 95 or more days of school (50%).

The Wells Academy will:

- Use attendance to identify students who are risk of becoming persistently absent.
- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence.
- Hold regular meetings with the families of students who the academy (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, at risk of or persistently or severely absence to discuss attendance and engagement at school.
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance such as Early Help.

Reintegration Policy

When long-term absentees return to school it is important that they are treated sensitively by all staff.

Reintegration often fails because it is unplanned; the student is sent back to their original timetable as if nothing has happened. Staff should be reminded to be sensitive, confine any remarks about the absence to 1:1 situations and to bear in mind the context of the attendance issue.

For each student, a member of staff will liaise with others to draw up a reintegration action plan. This plan will acknowledge the reasons for the student's absence and may involve a phased return in the first instance and temporary additional support in the Hub.

All staff who teach the student need to be advised in advance of an anticipated return so that they can plan how to re-introduce the student to their lessons. A risk assessment will be completed with the student where necessary.

Recognition of Attendance

Our attendance philosophy is rooted in a recognition-based approach that recognises both personal and collective achievements. This approach serves to prevent isolation, prevent victimisation, cultivate positive



environments, nurture relationships, foster inclusivity and ultimately cultivate intrinsic motivation among our children, families, and staff.

We recognise attendance by means of weekly shout outs to students who have had 100% for that week. In addition through our termly Zero to Hero rewards process. Leaders intentionally and continually acknowledge students that demonstrate resilience when returning from short term and long term absences through a welcome on the gate and during lesson visits.

Penalty Notice

Where all voluntary support options are unsuccessful or not appropriate (such as an unauthorised holiday in term time), the local authority can take forward legal intervention to formalise support and / or enforce attendance. This includes fines or a penalty notice. The arrangements for these procedures are found below: [Penalty Notice Code of Conduct September 2024 National Framework 2024 06 19.pdf \(govdelivery.com\)](#)

The Local Authority can fine families for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £80 within 21 days or £160 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher or Principal, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded student is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason
- If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice



Appendices

Appendix 1 – Attendance process, absent no reason

Day 1 – 5:

- Attendance Lead to send text message
- Head of Year to call home (trying all contacts on system)
- Possible home visit if historic PA

If no contact after 4 days of absence, absence letter hand delivered on day 5.

Day 6 – 10:

- Attendance Lead to send text message
- Head of Year to call home (trying all contacts on system)
- Home visit

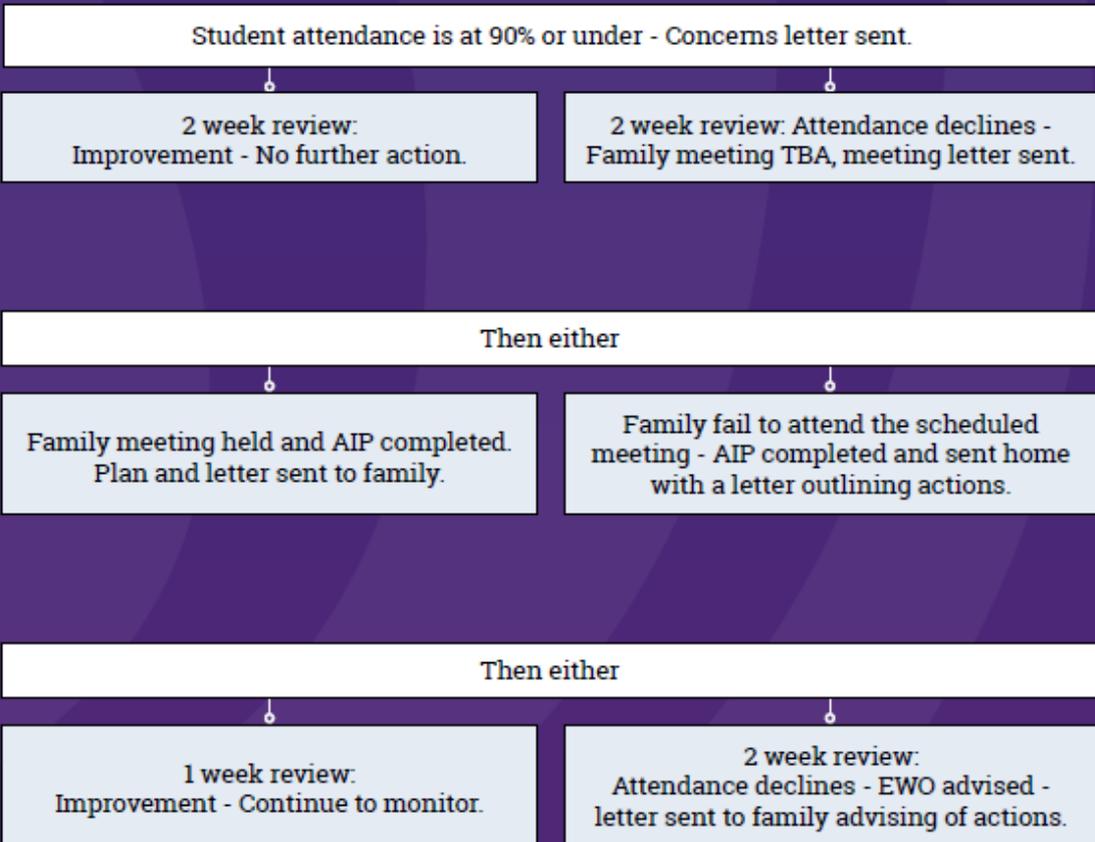
If no contact after 9 days of absence, Local Authority Education Welfare Officer contacted on day 10 and EWO letter hand delivered.

Day 11 – 20 continue to follow as above.

If no contact after 19 days of absence, CME contacted on day 20.

Appendix 2 – Attendance 90% and under

Attendance Process: 90% and Under



Appendix 3 – Coding attendance, in line with DfE guidance (2024)

Code	Meaning	Details
∧	Present at the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupils must be present during registration to be counted - If a pupil leaves after registration, they are still counted as attending for statistical purposes
L	Late arrival (before registers close)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The pupil arrives after the register starts, but before it closes - Schools should discourage late arrival and set a consistent time limit for open registration, not exceeding 30 minutes - If a pupil arrives late, after the register closes, mark them as absent using code U or another appropriate absence code
K	Attending education provision arranged by the local authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupil attends educational provision arranged by the local authority, not by the school - Examples include attending courses at college or receiving home tutoring - Schools must record the nature of the provision and ensure notification of absences
V	Attending an educational visit or trip	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupil attends a school-arranged educational visit or trip, supervised by school staff - Must take place during the recorded session - If a pupil does not attend, record absence using relevant absence code
P	Participating in a sporting activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupil attends an approved educational sporting activity - Criteria for recording attendance include approval by the school, educational nature of the activity, and appropriate supervision - Schools must ensure safeguarding measures and record absences with relevant codes
W	Attending work experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupil attends work experience as part of their education, arranged by the local authority or school - Criteria for recording attendance are similar to other approved educational activities - Schools must ensure safeguarding measures and record absences with relevant codes
B	Attending any other approved educational activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupil attends an approved educational activity other than sports or work experience - Criteria for recording attendance are similar to other approved educational activities - Schools must record the nature of the activity and ensure safeguarding measures
D	Dual registered at another school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Used when a pupil is registered at more than one school, indicating absence with leave to attend the other school - Main examples include attendance at a pupil referral unit, hospital school or special school, temporarily - Schools must promptly follow up on unexpected or unexplained absences to avoid double counting
C1	Leave of absence for regulated performance or employment abroad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Schools grant leave for pupils to participate in regulated performances or employment abroad under specific circumstances - Criteria for granting leave include licences issued by local authorities or exemptions

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Schools must record the absence using this code and consider it's impact on the pupils' education
M	Leave of absence for medical or dental appointment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Schools encourage appointments outside of school hours, otherwise prior agreement is necessary - Leave of absence is granted under specific conditions, including exceptional circumstances - Absences for medical or dental appointments are recorded using this code
J	Leave of absence for interview for employment or admission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Schools can grant leave for pupils to attend interviews for employment or admission to another educational institution - Applications can be made in advance and leave is granted based on specific criteria - The interview must occur during the recorded session, and the absence is classified as authorised
S	Leave of absence for studying for a public examination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Schools can grant leave for pupils to study for public examinations under specific conditions, agreed in advance with parents - Study leave should be granted sparingly, and provisions must be made for pupils who choose to continue attending school for revision - Absences for studying for public examinations are recorded using this code
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Schools can grant leave for non-compulsory school-age pupils to attend school part-time under certain circumstances - Absences for non-compulsory school age pupils are recorded using this code, with exceptions noted - For pupils subject to part-time timetable, this code should not be used and appropriate absence codes should be applied
C2	Leave of absence for compulsory school age pupil, subject to part-time timetable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Schools can Grant leave for compulsory school-age pupils to temporarily reduce their timetable to part-time in exceptional circumstances, agreed upon with parents - Absences for pupils with part time-timetables are recorded using this code, ensuring agreement between the school and parents
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Schools may grant leave of absence at their discretion, but only for exceptional circumstances. - Each application is assessed individually, considering specific facts and circumstances - Absences for exceptional circumstances are recorded using this code, ensuring compliance with regulations and discretion exercised by the school
	Pregnant Pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maternity leave for pregnant pupils is treated similarly to other leave of absence for exceptional circumstances - Schools should act reasonably and grant an appropriate period of leave considering individual circumstances, at their discretion
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Used when a pupil's Parent(s) is travelling for trade or business, and the pupil is travelling with them - Schools should only request proof of occupational travel when a genuine doubt exists about the reason for absence

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pupils should ideally attend schools where their parents are travelling, being dual registered at both their main school and the one they are temporarily attending - Classified as authorised absence for statistical purposes
R	Religious observance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Used when a pupil is absent on a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by their religious body - Schools may seek guidance from the Parents' religious body to ascertain such days. - Strategies such as setting term dates around religious observance days are encouraged - Classified as authorised absence for statistical purposes
I	Illness (Not medical or dental appointment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Indicates a pupil's inability to attend school due to illness, both physical and mental health related - Schools should not routinely request medical evidence but may do so when necessary - Classified as authorised absence for statistical purposes
E	Suspended or Permanently excluded (no alternative provision made)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Used when a pupil is suspended or permanently excluded, and no alternative provision has been arranged - Alternative provision should be arranged within six consecutive school days of suspension or permanent exclusion - Classified as authorised absence for statistical purposes
Q	Unable to attend school because lack of access arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Indicates a pupil's inability to attend school due to a failure by the local authority to provide access arrangements - Classified as not a possible attendance for statistical purposes
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Used when a pupil can't attend because the school is beyond walking distance and the usual transport provided by the school or local authority is unavailable - Walking distances for different age groups are specified - Classified as not a possible attendance for statistical purposes
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Indicates a Pupil's inability to attend school due to widespread travel disruptions caused by emergencies at the local, national or international level - Classified as not a possible attendance for statistical purposes
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Used when part of the school premises is unusable, and the pupil cannot practically be accommodated in the remaining usable parts - Classified as not a possible attendance for statistical purposes
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Applied when the entire school site is unexpectedly closed, such as due to adverse weather - Attendance registers are not taken, and pupils are marked with this code to signify the closure - Not applicable for planned closures like weekends or holidays - Classified as not a possible attendance for statistical purposes
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Used when a pupil is unable to attend due to being in police detention, remanded, or serving a sentence of detention - Communication with the Youth Offending team is encouraged to support educational needs during detention - Classified as not a possible attendance for statistical purposes
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Applied when a pupil's travel or attendance at school would violate public health guidance or legislation related to disease transmission

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Classified as not a possible attendance for statistical purposes
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Used for an unavoidable cause of preventing a pupil from attending school, not covered by other specific codes - The nature of the unavoidable cause must be recorded - Classified as not a possible attendance for statistical purposes
G	Holiday (not granted by the school)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Used when a pupil is absent for a holiday that the school did not approve in advance - Schools cannot retrospectively grant leave of absence, and absence for holidays without prior approval is considered unauthorised - Classified as unauthorised absence for statistical purposes
N	Reason for absence not yet established	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Employed when the reason for a pupil's absence has not been determined before the register closes - Schools must make efforts to ascertain the reason for absence promptly - If the reason cannot be established within five school days, the absence must be amended to Code O - Classified as unauthorised absence for statistical purposes
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Used when no reason for absence is established, or the school is not satisfied with the reason given, which doesn't align with authorised codes - Classified as unauthorised absence for statistical purposes
U	Late arrival (after registers closed)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Applied when a pupil arrives late after the register has closed but before the end of the session - Schools should discourage late arrival and set a specific time limit for registering attendance - Late arrival beyond the specified time, results in the pupil being marked absent - Classified as unauthorised absence for statistical purposes
Z	Administration Code: Prospective pupil (Not on admission register)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Utilised to set up registers in advance for prospective students who have not yet officially joined the school - Aims to streamline the administrative processes.

Appendix 4 – Penalty notice, fines for school attendance



Penalty Notice Fines for School Attendance are Changing!

With the introduction of The National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following changes will come into force for Penalty Notice fines issued after 19th August 2024

Per Parent, Per Child	First Offence
<p>Penalty Notice fines will now be issued to each parent, for each child that was absent.</p> <p><u>For example:</u> 3 siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines.</p>	<p>The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time leave of irregular attendance the amount will be:</p> <p>£160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days</p> <p>Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days</p>

5 consecutive days of term time leave

Penalty Notice Fines will be issued for Term Time leave of 5 or more consecutive days, inset training days are school days and can be included in the 5 or more consecutive days where there was intent to be absent for term time leave.

10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period

Penalty Notice fines will be considered when there have been 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period

**Second Offence
(Within 3 years)**

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time leave or irregular attendance the amount will be £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days

Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed for Term Time leave or irregular attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued, and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates' Court. Magistrates' fines can be up to £2500 per parent, per child

Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court can show on the parents future DBS certificate, due to a 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.